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Advocacy office fills important need

Sept. 14, 2007

KALAMAZOO--WMU's transfer students and military students and personnel now have a special resource committed to assuring smooth transitions when transferring from community colleges or departing or returning from military deployment.

The Advocacy Office for Transfer Students and Military Affairs was created in June by Interim President Diether H. Haenicke and has been endorsed by President John M. Dunn. The new unit serves as a liaison between WMU and community colleges around the state to make transitioning to the University as easy as possible.

Gerry Schma, one of the office's two university advocates, says students should always begin with the standard transfer process, which works well for most. But when the occasional complications arise, members of the campus community may use the advocacy office as a resource to quickly overcome barriers.

"We're prepared to assist when irresolvable issues occur or military entry or exit problems crop up," Schma says. "We exist as an additional service, not to replace but to support the usual procedures. Our office is a safety net designed to assure that each student receives the special service needed when unusual circumstances arise."

Besides assisting individual students, the advocacy office works closely with the presidents of community colleges to determine ways to better ease the transition to WMU. This includes examining current practices and policies that negatively impact student success or satisfaction and developing workable solutions. Similarly, it recommends procedures and policies that meet the special needs of deployed students, faculty and staff.

The Advocacy Office for Transfer Students and Military Affairs is located in 217 Bernhard Center and open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. To contact the office, send e-mail to advocacy-office@wmich.edu, visit www.wmich.edu/advocacy or call (269) 387-0740.

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WMU gives military families in-state tuition

March 19, 2008

KALAMAZOO--Active-duty military personnel and their dependents will be eligible for in-state tuition thanks to a motion approved by the Western Michigan University Board of Trustees at its March 18 meeting.

Military personnel who are Michigan residents and haven't established residency elsewhere, as well as those who are stationed in Michigan, will be eligible for the in-state rates. Their spouses and dependents also will be eligible for the benefit. Once the active-duty military person or dependent qualifies for the benefit, eligibility will continue for as long as they are continually enrolled and there is no change to the military or dependent status.

"WMU and its sister universities in Michigan, have recognized the difficulty active-duty military families have in meeting residency requirements," said Lowell P. Rinker, WMU vice president for business and finance, in describing the rationale behind the proposal. "We're doing this because we think it's important to recognize the valuable contributions our military personnel make to our country."

Rinker says the move dovetails nicely with a program adopted by WMU last year at this time. The Returning Veterans Assistance Program, which has been called a "mini-G.I. Bill," is designed to help returning veterans make the transition from military to student life easier by offering a first semester of free tuition while they complete the transition and in-state tuition for their remaining time at WMU.

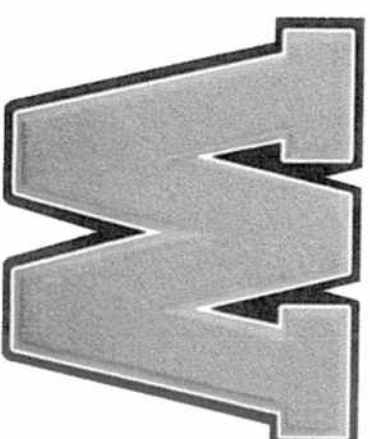
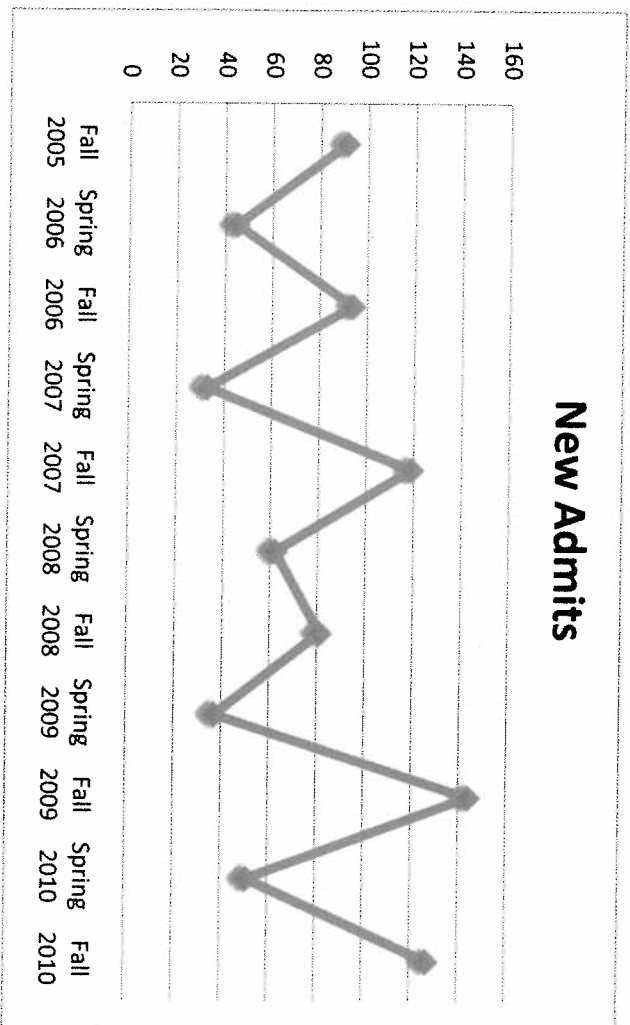
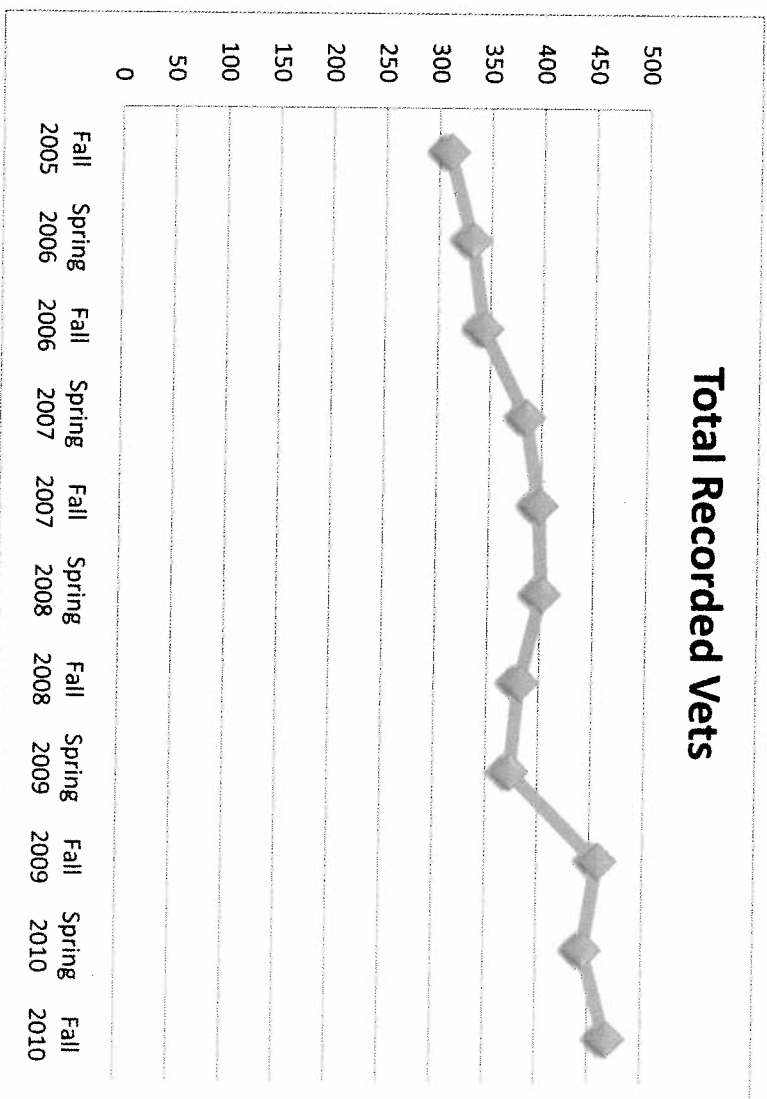
According to Rinker, some implementation details need to be worked out, but more information will be available from WMU's Advocacy Office for Transfer Students and Military Affairs at (269) 387-0740.

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Semester	Total Recorded Vets	New Admits	% change from previous semester
Fall 2005	310	91	N/A
Spring 2006	332	45	7.10%
Fall 2006	344	94	3.61%
Spring 2007	385	33	11.92%
Fall 2007	398	119	3.38%
Spring 2008	401	62	0.75%
Fall 2008	381	81	-4.99%
Spring 2009	373	37	-2.10%
Fall 2009	457	144	22.52%
Spring 2010	444	51	-2.84%
Fall 2010	467	127	5.18%
AVERAGES	390	80	4.45%

% change from fall '05 -- Fall '10 = 50.65%
 % change from fall '09 -- Fall '10 = 2.19%



**WESTERN MICHIGAN
UNIVERSITY**

5/19/2011

Fall 2010 Military Students at WMU: 457

Average Undergraduate GPA: 2.88				
Average Graduate GPA: 3.57				
Classification	Undergrad	402		
	Freshman		50	
	Sophomore		73	
	Junior		99	
	Senior		180	
	Graduate	55		
		Undergrad	Grad	total
College	Arts & Sciences	125	16	141
	Aviation	53	0	53
	Business	55	4	59
	Engineering & Applied Sciences	52	0	52
	Education	58	18	76
	Exploratory	11	0	11
	Extended University Programs	13	0	13
	Fine Arts	5	1	6
	Guest Student	1	0	1
	Health & Human Services	29	14	43
	Interdisciplinary	0	2	2
	Non-Degree	0	2	2
Ethnicity				
	Am Indian or Alaskan Native	3		
	Asian	3		
	Black or African American	34		
	Hispanic	12		
	No response	8		
	2 or more races	16		
	white	381		
		402		
Gender	male	363		
	female	94		
Average age is 27				
Age ranges:	19 or under	28		
	20-29	333		
	30-39	65		
	40-49	28		
	50 or above	3		

Michigan Public Universities Military Veterans Affairs Program Enrollment data
Project conducted by Western Michigan University HESA Intern Michael Fouts, Spring 2011

<u>School Name</u>	<u>Gross # of Vets Tracked</u>	<u>Dedicated M&V Office</u>	<u>Full-Time Staffer</u>	<u>SVA Chapter</u>
Central Michigan University	429	Yes	Yes	Yes
Eastern Michigan University	435	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ferris State University	400	Yes	Yes	Yes
Grand Valley State University	400+	No	No	No
Lake Superior State University	130 - 140	No	No	Yes
Michigan State University	350	No	No	Yes
Michigan Technological University	92	No	No	No
Northern Michigan University	240	No	No	No
Oakland University	270 OMVA / 382 OIR	Yes	Yes	No
Saginaw Valley State University	160	No	No	No
University of Michigan - Ann Arbor	225	No	No	Yes
University of Michigan - Dearborn	134	No	No	Yes
University of Michigan - Flint	300, 340 incl. depts	Yes	No	Yes
Wayne State University	500	Yes	No	Yes
Western Michigan University	467+	Yes	Yes	Yes

Office of Military and Veterans Affairs

Director, Tracey L. Maan

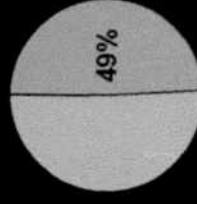
Did you know . . .

- 500+ military and veteran students are on campus - 184 new admits for 2010-2011?
- WMU has been nationally recognized three times as being a top military friendly school?
- Symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and other post-combat related issues can first surface in the classroom?
- Many of these student veterans are referred to services available to them at WMU by their instructors?

Traits of Student Veterans

- Reliable
- Responsible
- Dependable
- Dedicated
- Trainable
- Knowledgeable
- Respectful
- Punctual
- Very mature for their age
- Very experienced - especially with basic necessities of life
- Global perspective
- Heightened sense of awareness
- Goal-driven

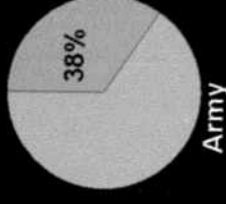
Returning Home:



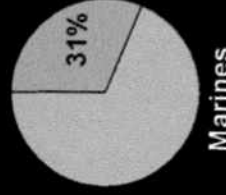
Army National Guard



Marine Reserves



Army



Marines

Percentage of combat veterans reporting symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression or anxiety 90 to 120 days after returning from war.

Why do veterans struggle in college?

- Used to being with others of similar background
- Need personal support
- View college as confusing
- "Unfriendly" policies and procedures
- Lack of funds / benefits slow to arrive
- Feel out of place with the traditional age students
- Overwhelmed by life
- Lack of empathy from fellow students/ staff

